(At 1999-2000 prices)

Year	Actual Annual Growth Rate in Agriculture & allied sectors (%)
2002-03	-7.2
2003-04	10.0
2004-05	0.0
2005-06(QE)	6.0
2006-07(AE)	2.7

Source: Central Statistical Organization, QE = Quick Estimate, AE =Advance Estimates

(c) and (d) The share of agriculture and allied sectors in GDP at constant (1999-2000) prices has declined over the last few years. It was 24.0 per cent in 2001-02, 21.5 per cent in 2002-03, 21.7 per cent in 2003-04, 20.2 per cent in 2004-05, 19.7 per cent in 2005-06 and 18.5 per cent in the year 2006-07. The decline in share of agriculture and allied sectors in total GDP follows from relatively faster pace of growth in services sector the share of which increased from 51 per cent during 2001-02 to 54.9 per cent in the year 2006-07.

(e) The National Development Council (NDC) in its 53rd meeting held on 29.5.2007 has emphasized to evolve a strategy to rejuvenate agriculture. It involves, *inter-alia,* the following crucial elements:

- State Governments are to prepare District and State Agriculture Plans for prioritizing the investment in the sector.
- Introducing a new scheme for Additional Central Assistance (ACA) to State Plans. The newly created National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) would assist States in planning for rainfed areas.
- To provide additional resources for irrigation.
- Strategic focus on the national agricultural research effort.
- To take new initiatives for skill development in the farming community.

The Government of India has recently approved two schemes for enhancement of agriculture sector. These are (i) National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and (ii) Additional Central Assistance Scheme (ACAS) for implementing the State and District Plans for agricultural development.

NPM in Andhra Pradesh

1377. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the 15 districts that have been notified as 'distress districts' by the Central Government in Andhra Pradesh, the Non-Pesticidal Movement (NPM) is gaining momentum;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry is extending any assistance to consolidate the existing efforts and spread the NPM activity into the remaining districts of Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) As per the information received from the State, the Department of Agriculture, Andhra Pradesh, has not taken up Non-Pesticidal Movement (NPM) programme. Government of India and State Government are supporting the conduct of Farmers' Field Schools in Integrated Crop Management Practices. Farmers' Field Schools aim at reducing the cost of cultivation through judicious use of pesticides, and adoption of integrated pest management practices. The Department also organizes Farmers' Field. Schools in organic farming of rice, cotton, chillies, sugarcane, maize, pulses, oilseeds and vegetables, wherein, emphasis is on use of organic manures and bio-pesticides. Due to the training to farmers through Farmers' Field Schools and Farmers Training Centres in the districts, the pesticide consumption in the State has come down substantially.

(d) The policy of the Government in plant protection sector is Integrated Pest Management, which is an environment friendly broad ecological approach for managing pest problems. It encompasses pest control techniques such as cultural, mechanical and biological including judicious use of chemical pesticides.

Suicides in Maharashtra

1378. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the abnormally large number of farmer suicides in Maharashtra noticed during last several years;

(b) the list of fanner suicides during the last three years in Maharashtra, location-wise, district-wise and year-wise;

(c) the details of relief measures announced so far to provide assistance or relief to the families and schemes announced for assistance in the event of failure or destruction of their crops; and

(d) the details of action proposed to sanction special relief package to these farmers' families, district/location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) A fact finding team constituted by the Planning Commission, to study rural distress and disparities in regional development in Maharashtra, with particular emphasis on Vidarbha region, identified main causes for perception of acute distress among the farmers as lack of credit availability, lack of irrigation facilities, high cost of production and low yield, high cost of seeds and their poor quality, inadequate marketing support and